

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the Claims as follows:

1. (Previously and Currently Amended): A method for reducing corrosion of a head element during the manufacture of a disk drive including rework operations, said head element being initially contained within the housing of said disk drive following assembly, said method comprising the steps of:

opening said housing of said disk drive;
removing said head element from said housing of said disk drive; and
applying a non-permanent protective coating to said head element.

2. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of cleaning said head element prior to said step of applying a non-permanent protective coating.

3. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating is applied in a vacuum chamber.

4. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating is applied utilizing solvent-mediated deposition.

5. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating is applied utilizing vapor-mediated deposition.

6. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said step of applying a non-permanent protective coating is performed by depositing precursor molecules in the vapor phase.

7. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating comprises a fluorocarbon polymer.

8. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating is a thickness of greater than 50 angstroms.

9. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of storing said head element following said step of applying said non-permanent protective coating.

10. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of post-processing said non-permanent protective coating to enhance the its corrosion protection of said head element.

11. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of reworking at least one component of said disk drive.

12. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 10, further comprising reworking at least a portion of the disk drive followed by the step of removing at least a portion of said non-permanent protective coating after said step of reworking said disk drive.

13. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 12, further comprising the step of reassembling said disk drive after said step of removing at least said a portion of said non-permanent protective coating.

14. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 11, further comprising the step of removing at least a portion of said non-permanent protective coating from said head element after said step of reworking said disk drive.

15. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 14, further comprising the step of reassembling said disk drive after said step of removing at least said a portion of said non-permanent protective coating from said head element.

16. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim ~~14~~¹⁵, wherein further comprising the step of removing at least a portion of said non-permanent protective coating comprises completely exposing said head element after said step of reworking at least a portion of said disk drive.

17. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 16, further comprising the step of reassembling said disk drive after said step of removing at least said a portion of said non-permanent protective coating completely exposing said head element.

18. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 13, further comprising the step of testing said disk drive after said step of reassembling said disk drive.

19. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 11, further comprising the combination step of simultaneously cleaning said head element while removing said non-permanent protective coating, after said step of reworking at least a portion of said disk drive.

20. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 12, wherein said step of removing at least said a portion of said non-permanent protective coating is performed utilizing a solvent.

21. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 19, wherein said step of simultaneously cleaning said non-permanent head element while removing said protective coating, is performed using a non-aqueous solvent.

22. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 10, wherein said post-processing step is performed by exposing said non-permanent protective coating to a form of energy selected from the group consisting of infrared, ultraviolet, plasma, or radiant heat.

23. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 11, further comprising the step of reassembling the disk drive followed by the step of removing at least said a portion of said non-permanent protective coating.

24. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising the step of testing said disk drive.

25. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 13, further comprising the step of removing at least an additional portion of said non-permanent protective coating after said step of reassembling the disk drive.

26. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 25, further comprising the step of testing said disk drive.

27. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 15, further comprising the step of removing at least an additional portion of said non-permanent protective coating from said head element after said step of reassembling said disk drive.

28. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 27, further comprising the step of testing said disk drive.

29. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating has a thickness comprising ~~comprises~~ at least one monolayer.

30. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating has a thickness comprising ~~comprises~~ at least 50 angstroms.

31. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said non-permanent protective coating is applied having a thickness up to approximately 250 angstroms.

32. (Withdrawn): In a disk drive having at least one head element, said disk drive having been opened after assembly for purposes of reworking, and the head element having been removed, the improvement comprising:

a protective coating applied to said head element after removal of the head element to reduce corrosive effects from the surrounding atmosphere.

33. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is applied in a vacuum chamber.

34. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is applied utilizing a solvent-mediated deposition process.

35. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is applied utilizing a vapor-mediated deposition process.

36. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating comprises a fluorocarbon polymer.

37. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is a thickness of greater than 50 angstroms.

38. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is applied by depositing precursor molecules in the vapor phase.

39. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is exposed to an energy source selected from the group consisting of infrared, ultraviolet, plasma, or radiant heat.

40. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating thickness comprises at least one monolayer.

41. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating thickness comprises at least 50 angstroms.

42. (Withdrawn): The improvement, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said protective coating is applied having a thickness up to approximately 250 angstroms.

43. (Previously and Currently Amended): A method for shipping a head element removed from a disk drive during manufacture of said disk drive, said method comprising the steps of:

removing said head element from said disk drive;

applying a protective coating to said head element;

mounting said head element to a shipping comb;

placing said head element into a container; and,

transporting said container.

44. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 43, further comprising the step of cleaning said head element prior to said step of applying a protective coating.

45. Cancelled.

46. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim ~~43~~⁴⁵, wherein said step of applying said ~~a~~ protective coating to said head element occurs following mounting said element to said shipping comb.

47. (Currently Amended): A method for storing a head element removed from a disk drive, said method comprising the steps of:

removing said head element from said disk drive;

applying a fluorocarbon polymer protective coating to said head element; and,

placing said head element in a storage container.

48. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 47, further comprising the step of cleaning said head element prior to said step of applying said ~~a~~ protective coating.

49. (Original): The method, as claimed in Claim 47, further comprising the step of mounting said head element to a shipping comb.

50. (Currently Amended): The method, as claimed in Claim 49, wherein said step of applying said ~~a~~ protective coating to said head element occurs following mounting said head element to said shipping comb.

51. (Previously and Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing a disk drive, comprising:

disassembling a portion of the disk drive;

removing a head element from the disk drive;

applying a temporary protective coating on said head element after disassembly wherein disassembly includes removal of the head element from the disk drive;

reworking a portion of the disk drive.

52. (Previously Amended): The method of Claim 51, further comprising mounting said head element on a shipping comb.

53. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, wherein applying ~~a~~ said temporary protective coating on said head element comprises applying a polymeric fluorocarbon.

54. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, further comprising applying said temporary protective coating using a solvent-mediated deposition process.

55. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, further comprising applying said temporary protective coating using a vapor-mediated deposition process.

56. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, further comprising applying said temporary protective coating by depositing precursor molecules in the vapor phase.

57. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, wherein said temporary protective coating is applied at a thickness of greater than 50 angstroms.

58. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 57, further comprising exposing said temporary protective coating to a solvent.

59. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 54, further comprising post processing said temporary protective coating to enhance the its corrosion protection of said protective coating.

60. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 59, further comprising exposing said temporary protective coating to an energy source selected from the group consisting of infrared, ultraviolet, plasma, or radiant heat.

61. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, wherein said temporary protective coating is applied at a thickness comprising at least one monolayer.

62. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, wherein said temporary protective coating is applied at a thickness comprising at least 50 angstroms.

63. (Previously and Currently Amended): The method of Claim 51, wherein said temporary protective coating is applied at a thickness up to approximately 250 angstroms.

Please add the following new claims:

64. (New): The method of Claim 51, further comprising:

removing at least a portion of said temporary protective coating after said step of reworking said disk drive.

65. (New): A method for reducing corrosion of a head element during the manufacture of a disk drive including rework operations, said head element being initially contained within the housing of said disk drive following assembly, said method comprising the steps of:

opening said housing of said disk drive;

removing said head element from said housing of said disk drive;

applying a protective coating to said head element;

reworking at least a portion of the disk drive; and

removing at least a portion of said protective coating after said step of reworking said disk drive.